

# Defense *advocate*

## *Legislation could delay a BRAC move*

The defense authorization bill for fiscal year 2011 ([H.R. 5136](#)) passed the House this month with at least one item of particular

interest to northern Virginia. A measure was added by 8<sup>th</sup> District Rep. Jim Moran that could delay the consolidation of thousands of defense workers to the new BRAC 133 site at the Mark Center in Alexandria until the Department of Defense is able to devise a plan to ease commutes and make specific road improvements to keep the already-congested area roadways from getting worse.

Specifically, the bill limits to 1,000 the number of parking spaces that may be used by the Defense Department once the building is open until the Secretary of Defense submits “a viable transportation plan” and certifies that construction has been completed to “provide adequate ingress to and egress from” the facility.

Increased traffic related to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) mandated move has been a hot topic since the Mark Center was identified in September 2008 as the site for relocating more than 6,000 civilian jobs, mostly from leased space in Arlington. Virginia Department of Transportation studies suggest that “complete gridlock” is likely in the area if significant changes aren’t made before the move happens.

Last year Moran worked with Maryland representatives to secure \$300 million to help fix some of the problems, specifically those near Fort Belvoir and the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda.

The House’s version of the defense authorization bill has been sent to the Senate for consideration. The legislation is an annual requirement to specify the budget and expenditures of the Department of Defense, and it is typically signed into law in the fall.



## *Coming Events*

**July 14, 2010**

[Virginia Military Advisory Council Meeting](#)  
4 p.m., State Capitol, House Room 3  
Richmond, Va.  
Contact: Wendy Hoffman, (804) 225-3882  
[wendy.hoffman@governor.virginia.gov](mailto:wendy.hoffman@governor.virginia.gov)

**July 20, 2010**

[VNDIA Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting](#)  
10 a.m., [Jepson Alumni Executive Center](#)  
University of Mary Washington  
Fredericksburg, Va.  
Contact: Patrick Tremblay, (804) 545-5716  
[ptremblay@YesVirginia.org](mailto:ptremblay@YesVirginia.org)  
No public comment period has been scheduled.

**August 8-11, 2010**

[Assoc. of Defense Communities Annual Conference](#)  
San Francisco, Calif.  
Contact: La-Shawn Maloy, (202) 822-5256  
[lmaloy@defensecommunities.org](mailto:lmaloy@defensecommunities.org)

**October 20, 2010**

[VNDIA Quarterly Board of Directors Meeting](#)  
[Virginia War Memorial](#)  
Richmond, Va.  
Contact: Patrick Tremblay, (804) 545-5716  
[ptremblay@YesVirginia.org](mailto:ptremblay@YesVirginia.org)

This VDOT rendering shows the new construction (in pink) underway at the Mark Center in Alexandria. To the right (northeast) is Seminary Road, expected to be most negatively affected by the influx of workers. The green space to the left of the buildings is the Winkler Botanical Preserve.

## Reserve center planned for Fort A.P. Hill

The U.S. Army Reserve is preparing an environmental assessment for the construction and operation of an estimated \$15.5 million USAR Center at Fort A.P. Hill in Caroline County. The center would include a 33,170 square-foot training building, a 7,526 square-foot maintenance shop and a 1,065 square-foot unheated storage building. The center would provide administrative space, classrooms, a firing simulator and physical fitness areas for one Reserve unit of about 200 people. Two sites are under consideration, both about 2.5 miles inside the fort's fence-line.



A squad clears a room in a shoot house at Fort A.P. Hill. The 76,000 acre installation was established in 1941, and now includes 41 ranges and 31 training areas. About 60,000 service members from all branches train at the fort each year. *U.S. Army photo.*

The unit proposed to occupy the center is a new Multi-Role Bridge Company created as part of the "Grow the Army" initiative. The company would bring 12 full-time personnel to Fort A.P. Hill, plus 185 reservists for one weekend per month and two weeks in a row annually. A Multi-Role Bridge Company provides personnel and equipment required for the transportation, assembly, disassembly, maintenance and retrieval of U.S. Army bridging systems.

Requests for comments on the proposed action were sent out May 24 to regulators, elected officials and others who signed up for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) mailing list. The installation is requesting all responses to those letters in writing no later than June 24, allowing for a 30-day comment period from the date the letters were sent out. Following these responses, an initial environmental assessment will be published, followed by a 30-day public comment period. The Army will then have 30 days to either publish a finding of no significant impact or give notice that a complete environmental impact statement (EIS, a more thorough study) will be pursued.

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## New facility for Chesapeake

A \$64 million, 400-cell military correctional facility is being built at the Norfolk Naval Support Activity, Northwest Annex, in southern Chesapeake. The medium security facility is part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, and will consolidate other Department of the Navy correctional facilities including those at Marine Corps Base Quantico and Naval Station Norfolk.

The facility will be more than 200,000 square-feet and will house sailors and Marines who are either awaiting trial or have been sentenced to terms of five years or less. It is expected to be completed by May 2011.

The Navy's Northwest Annex was established in 1955 and covers 3,600 acres straddling the border between Virginia and North Carolina's Currituck County.

## New library for Prince George County

Ground was broken last month for a new library in Prince George County. The new branch will be part of the Hopewell-based Appomattox Regional Library system, and construction is being assisted by a VNDIA-administered grant. The library became essential following BRAC decisions that will lead to the doubling of population at neighboring Fort Lee. Prince George County schools provide education for children living on post.

The \$3 million, 12,500 square-foot library is expected to be complete by next summer.